

## SUPPLEMENT.

# The Standard

ODDEN, APRIL 8, 1888.

### EPISTLE.

To the Officers and Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in General Conference assembled.

### DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:

At each of the past six General Conferences of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there has been an Epistle from the Presidency of the Church read to the assembled officers and Saints and published for the benefit of those who were prevented from being present at the Conference. The reasons for this are well known to the Church and the world. A number of the Apostles have been unable to personally attend the Conferences or other open gatherings. Their voices have not been heard inspiring, encouraging, strengthening and warning the Saints, or in the discharge of the other public duties which devolve upon them in connection with their ministry. It is, therefore, therefore, that Epistles should be written to the Church in which counsel could be given and testimony be borne. While this condition of affairs, so far as the Apostles are concerned, still remains unchanged, the instructions upon general subjects in the previous Epistles are not repeated, and apply directly to the entire lives and surroundings of the Saints, that we deem it not necessary to repeat them at the present time or to write a lengthy Epistle.

### OPPOSITION CONFRONTING THE SAINTS

No people of whom we have any knowledge have been called upon to pass through such scenes and to have such a peculiar experience as the Latter-day Saints. The trials and difficulties we have had to contend with, so numerous and so varied in character, have scarcely been equalled in our generation. But those we have had to meet during the past three or four years, and which still confront us, are new even to our experience. They have come upon us in a new shape. Judgments in the same sense prompted by the same spirit, and designed for the same end, as other plans which have been put into operation for our injury and overthrow, the present attack which is made upon us, differs largely in many of its features and methods from anything we have ever had to encounter. We have seen led to expect from the beginning that as the work of God grew and developed in the earth, the resistance to it would become more formidable and widespread, would increase in intensity and vigor, and bring to us more and more influential powers. This

has ever been the voice of prophecy and testimony unto us concerning the future of the work of God which we have espoused. If, then, we have not been prepared for these trials which we now have to overcome, it has not been because we have not been warned of their approach. By the testimony of His Spirit and by the voices of His faithful servants, God has given His people ample time for preparation. And the Latter-day Saints who have tried so as to enjoy the spirit of such religious have expected, and have prepared themselves to meet, such trials as have come upon us, and others which may yet be in reserve for us before the final victory is achieved over Satan and the embattled powers of darkness.

### THE PRIVILEGE OF REVELATION.

It has been knowledge which God has given concerning His work, and which is constantly imparted as it is needed to His people, which is one of the chief causes of the strength possessed by the Latter-day Saints. It is the principle of revelation from the Head of the Church to the Church itself—a principle which in its operation is not confined to one man, or to three men, or to twelve men, but is extended to every individual in the Church, in greater or less degree, as each one chooses to avail himself of it. There has been appointed a way, however, by which revelation from the Lord for the government of His Church is received. There is but one man on the earth, at a time, who holds this power. But every faithful member has the privilege of receiving revelation from the Lord for his guidance in his own affairs and to testify to him concerning the correctness of public teachings and private practices.

The great promise which accompanies the preaching of the Gospel, as revealed from heaven in each day, is that the Holy Ghost will be bestowed upon the sincerely penitent who obey His holy ordinances. Through the Holy Ghost a knowledge of the past, present and to come is communicated and the mind and will of the Father made known. In this way the Almighty reveals His power to those who obey His commandments and whose lives are pure and acceptable before Him, so that they can be prepared for all the events and trials that may lie in their pathway.

If there are any members of the Church who do not know by their own experience that this is true, they may be assured that they do not live up to their privileges. All Saints should be in close communion with the Holy Ghost, and, through it, with the Father, or there is danger of their being overcome of evil and falling by the wayside.

We, therefore, say to the Latter-day Saints: The Holy Ghost will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle. If you would enjoy the full powers and gifts of your religion, you must be pure. If you are guilty of weakness, follies and sins, you must repent them; that is, you must thoroughly forsake them. In no other way can we please God. "Man of holiness" is His name, and He delights in the efforts of His children to be pure.

### ABSENCE OF OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

We feel led to speak in this strain, for the reason that while the Latter-day Saints are to prosper in their religion and to increase in the knowledge of God must always live close to Him, the present is an extraordinary time which appears to require more help and strength from the Lord than usual. The Church has been left, as never for so long a time before, without the public ministrations of a number of the men to whom its members are looked for instruction and counsel. Not only has the number of the Apostles who could minister in public been greatly reduced, but the same causes which have relegated them to seclusion have had the effect to keep many Presidents of States and their counsellors, Senators and their assistants, as well as High Councilors and other active men to the priesthood, from officiating in their callings. The people have felt the absence of these men and the loss of their teachings and guidance. But has the Lord on this account forgotten His people? No, certainly not. The prayers of the faithful men of God, who have been prevented from ministering to His people, and whose hearts have been full of love and earnest desire for their welfare, have been constantly offered to the Lord that He would have seen to His flock. He would make up to them, in His more abundant outpouring of His Holy Spirit, for the deprivation to which they have been subjected in not having the presence of many of His servants among them.

### THE HAND AND PURPOSES OF GOD.

The Savior said, "It is impossible but that offences will come; but," He added, "whoever will sin against me, let him come." In our case offences have come, and it has appeared that we could not avoid them. Still we not acknowledge the hand of God in that which has taken place in our land and which affects us so deeply? We who have seen in all our afflictions, wrongs and sorrows which have happened to us, His providence so plainly manifested, must feel that the occurrences of the past have been for our benefit and permitted by Him for a wise purpose. We

cannot suppose that these happenings have been by chance and without a design. God has been dealing with us in the past. Mysterious as have been many things when we had them to encounter, time has never failed to throw light upon and explain them. When they happened we, perhaps, acknowledged the hand of the Lord. But, then, the assurance of the Lord having said we should do so, but this was upon the principle of faith. Afterwards, however, we have longed to know the reason, and seeing how wondrously God had wrought, we, in the fulness of our hearts and in view of the results, have acknowledged His faith but in developed knowledge, that God's hand was in all that had occurred. So with the experience, painful though it be, which we are now gaining.

God has a purpose to accomplish in permitting the treatment which we have received. Whatever the result to others who have permitted and been active in pushing it, to us it cannot be anything but profitable and beneficial. We realize it is the right spirit and hear it patiently. One good effect is apparent. The Latter-day Saints are compelled, perhaps to a greater extent than ever before, to stand out for themselves and not to depend so much upon others to lead them. Some, not having lived so as to have the presence and assistance of the Holy Ghost, may stumble and fall. But those who have lived up to their privileges will find that God has not forgotten His promises and has not left His people to themselves, nor without a testimony as to the course they should pursue.

#### THE SAINTS MUST BE TESTED.

The pathway of the people of God has been beset with difficulties. They have been environed with dangers. Dark clouds have almost enshrouded them, but amidst all these, the still, real voice of the Spirit of God has been heard. His Saints have had a testimony from Him that the course they have been led to take is the right one and that He will never fail to make known His mind and will to those so long as they live up to His requirements.

It appears plain that it is God's purpose to suffer His Saints to be thoroughly tried and tested, so that they may prove their integrity and know the character of the foundation upon which they build. Many things have occurred during the last twelve months which are well adapted to test the faith and integrity of the people. It does not seem possible that those who do not live so as to have the light of the Holy Ghost, and who cannot escape doubts and fears concerning the work of God. So many things have occurred which are entirely different to previous times, unknown as to the course that would be taken in building up Zion that each one needs to have a knowledge for himself to clearly understand the will of the people in the path which we are now pursuing. To some who are inclined to depend and to take a gloomy view of affairs, the only Zion mentioned appears to be drifting away from its old moorings, because things are being done or movements commenced to which, to their eyes, portended disaster to us and to the work of God.

#### UNFAITHFUL CRITICISM.

There has always been a few among us who have been in the full force of bondage, and who have failed to see the wisdom of God in the steps which His people have been led to take. They have questioned and found fault with the counsel that has been given and the measures which have been adopted, and have asserted that revelation had ceased and the Saints were no longer guided by men to whom God made known His will. The prophet Joseph said in his life and death that the criticism and censure of the class. He was often accused of being a fallen prophet and of leading the Church astray. During the last presidency of President Brigham Young, the same charges were made, and many apostatized because they believed, as they stated, that he was no longer led by the Lord. Experience has proved that in all such cases those who make these accusations are themselves in the dark.

But the faithful people—those who have lived strictly in accordance with their professed faith and with the requirements of the Gospel—have not been assailed by doubts of this character. There might be many things which they could not clearly understand, the reasons for which might not be fully apparent to them at the time; but possessing the Spirit of God and being led by it, they have in the Lord and felt satisfied to leave the management of His kingdom and its affairs to His supreme wisdom. They developed the means by which the correctness of the course which the Church had been led to adopt. This has occurred so frequently that our ears that the leaders will readily suggest themselves to those familiar with our history. In this way, however, the faith of the people has been constantly tested.

#### THE ANOINTING THE SAINTS HAVE RECEIVED.

The Apostle John, in speaking to the Saints in his day, said: "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and as those things which are come to pass, even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

The Saints in our day have received the same anointing and they should be in a position to not be dependent upon man to teach and tell them that which is right. They have had a flood of instruction given to them in ways that are past. This instruction has covered the entire policy of building up the kingdom of God on the earth. Of this contained instruction they have been to a great extent deprived of. It has appeared to be the design of Providence that they should be led to show to the heavens, to each other and to the world whether the truths they have been taught have had the proper effect upon them or not—whether when left to a certain extent to themselves they will be governed in their daily lives and acts by principle—principles to the truth of which testimony has been borne by the Holy Ghost—or by the spirit and customs of Babylon by which they are surrounded, but from which they are supposed to be gathered out.

#### NECESSITY OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

The present is an appropriate time for each member of the Church to in-

duce in self-examination—to measure his conduct and life in the full light of the heavenly principles revealed to us. Ours is no ordinary calling. Great opportunities and privileges have been bestowed upon us. To us, as a people, has been entrusted the grand and glorious labor of laying the foundation of the kingdom of God upon the earth. The act of our lives should be performed with this in view. Nothing should be done by any one calling himself a Latter-day Saint, but in full accord with the policy which God has announced as proper to be adopted in establishing that kingdom. In this connection there are questions which each one should ask himself: Do I, in all my words and influence and in all the transactions of my life, constantly keep before me the advancement and prosperity of the Zion of God as the first and most important consideration? Do I, through covetousness of a desire for personal profit and advantage, depart from that line of conduct which God, through His Spirit and the teachings of His servants, has said His Saints should follow? Do I, by my words and acts, set such an example before my family that my children will grow up to manhood and womanhood fully imbued with a love of Zion and with an understanding of the principles upon which Zion is to be built?

Many more questions of a similar character each one can ask himself in the process of self-examination. If these can be answered in the affirmative, there need be no fears included in concerning the effect of the Edmunds-Tucker law, the confiscation suits, the state movements, the persecutions, or any other measure which may be adopted either in favor of or against the Zion of God. Respecting all these movements, about which there is more or less agitation and concern and perhaps excitement, there need be no fears if the Latter-day Saints will only be true to the covenants they have made with their God and strictly carry out the principles which He has laid as man's govern us in the building up of His Zion.

#### CONSEQUENCES OF FORGETTING COVENANTS.

If, however, we forget our covenants, and depart from and disregard the teachings which Zion has been given, then we are, Latter-day Saints, our position is full of peril to us. God's purpose will not be thwarted, but we shall be overcome and those who persist in this course will be rejected and be deprived of all share in the blessings promised to Zion. Where those professing to be Latter-day Saints, knowledge and sagacity are in contravention of the counsels which he has given us, then we have cause to fear and the people of the wicked against us, joined by the foolish disobedience and rebellion of professed Saints, become a serious menace to the peace, prosperity and progress of Zion.

Praying the Lord to endow every follower of the Church with the area to unity of calling with every gift of the equalization which belongs to the priesthood which he bears, and to fill the members of the Church with the Holy Ghost and His gifts.

I remain your Brother and Servant in Christ Jesus.

WILLIAM FRODOHUFF,  
a behalf of the Quorum of the Twelve.  
April 25, 1888.